

## Star Wars

### Wizard's RPG Stories

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Thurm Loogg Speaks

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Thurm Loogg and the Metatheran Cartel have not enjoyed much popularity in Cularin over the past few years. Following the debacle with the ch'hala grove (widely regarded by the Cartel as a "nightmare," though whether they use this word in terms of public relations or the actual effects of their actions remains unclear), Loogg ascended to command of the Cartel in Cularin. His predecessor, the late Velin Wir, did a great deal to harm the image of the Cartel -- and, for some reason, Loogg has yet to undo the damage. Whether he believed that simultaneously broadcasting the following message to every receiving device in the system would help the Cartel's image remains (as is true of so much with regard to the Cartel) a mystery.

Hello, Cularin! It is I, the beneficent Thurm Loogg, representative of the omnibenevolent Metatheran Cartel, and I am here to speak to you.

Now, I know what you are saying. "Why is Thurm Loogg appearing so suddenly on my datapad, or on my holovid? Is it possible that this face of kindness could be where I did not think it was?"

Take heart, Cularin, for the Cartel is everywhere! This transmission is our way to thank you for all you have done for the Cartel, and to remind you how very, very much the Cartel loves Cularin.

How much do we love you? I will tell you. You will listen. Some time ago, we learned that a certain problem had developed in the Cularin holonet. There is, shall we say, a security breach. Oh, it is true, it is true! A most frightening thing, a security breach, especially one that allows so many datastreams to be accessed by someone with the proper equipment. When the Cartel learned of the situation, we spoke about what to do, and it was decided that we could not allow Cularin to continue in such a fashion. It would be bad for all of us if someone were to learn too much or see too much. Very bad.

So, to show how much we love you and how much we care, today we exploit the weakness in the system to demonstrate just how flawed the system is. That is right, we love you enough to exploit weaknesses in your defenses!

But only to help, of course. We would never, never use any information that we gained about the financial policies of Governor Chistor's administration to our own advantage. Goodness no! And we would certainly never

consider capturing encrypted data sent from the Jedi academy to the Jedi Council on Coruscant, decrypting it, and selling it to someone else. Not the Cartel! And it goes without saying that we would not even consider paying attention to transmissions from gracious Lord Nirama's ships to their leader, in which they outline weaknesses in the Thaereian perimeter around the system. It would be rude!

There is too much that we owe Cularin and the heroes of Cularin. All you have done for the Cartel is not forgotten! Why, some of you have visited Caarimon, and few in the galaxy can make such a claim. Caarimon, beautiful Caarimon... We understand that some of you even wish to marry into Caarite society, to become more like us.

I cannot blame you. To be a Caarite is almost to be part of the Cartel, and it must be very difficult indeed to watch the Cartel, in its beneficence, work in Cularin, and to know you cannot be a part of it.

It saddened me that the galaxy found itself in such turmoil that our plan to allow you to invest in the Cartel never came to fruition. You would have made so many credits, you would not have known what to do! You would have had the finances to go to a surgeon and even begin to look more like a member of the Cartel. So many things would have been better, but it was not to be. It is too bad.

At least some of you have begun doing contract work for us. That is good. That you do not speak of it to your shipmates or neighbors troubles us, but that is all right. We understand that there is still much anger over the trees that my most unwise predecessor had removed from Cularin, and that you feel you must hide your allegiance to the Cartel, though it pains you in your heart.

I am certain you are saying to yourself, "Is this all the munificent Thurm Loogg has to say to me? Is he only going to talk and talk and say nothing about current matters?"

Of course I will say something! Many things are not good right now, but the Cartel wishes to make them better. That is why we have begun another celebration. The Cartel enjoys celebrations, and we have seen how very cathartic they are to you. Why, it was only a year ago that so many of you took pleasure in firing on a droid effigy of myself.

I am so flattered. It means a great deal to me that you would take time out of your busy schedules of hunting Sith and fighting against threats from across the galaxy to shoot at a likeness of my humble self. It is a mark of your affection for me, I know, and it is something that I return with all my hearts.

I return the affection, of course. Not the desire to shoot at you. I would never want to shoot at you - I cannot shoot at all, so it would do no good! I am no more able to shoot a blaster than lovely Senator Wren or honorable Governor Chistor or respected Master Lanius. Those of us who find so many lives under our control would never consider brandishing a blaster against those who need us so much. That would be silly. You would not love us nearly so much if we shot you.

It has become clear to the Cartel that many of you desire a target for your hostility. Cularin is quite a hostile place, is it not? But then, the galaxy is quite a hostile place. The galaxy is the galaxy, though, and this is your home. Certainly, one should always defend one's home. But from whom do you defend it?

I, Thurm Loogg, will offer suggestions. First, you should defend your home against any Sith that happen to come to Cularin.

Sith are bad. You should not want them here. They should be your first priority in removing threats. Beware the Sith, because they are sneaky! They may already be among us, so you should look for them. Spend great amounts of time looking for them, and the harder you look, the more any Sith will say, "You know, Cularin does not like Sith. Perhaps I should leave." And then they will leave, and you will be safe.

Does that not sound like a good idea?

Oh, and may I mention that there has never been a Caarite Sith Lord?

I believe you should also defend yourselves against the droid armies of the Separatists. Bad Separatists! Evil Count Dooku has split the galaxy. He is a bad man! If evil Count Dooku comes to Cularin, you should hunt him down! If the droid armies of the Separatists come to Cularin, you should destroy them!

After all, we have seen that the brave citizens of Cularin excel at shooting droids.

For that matter, there is not much that the citizens of Cularin do not excel at shooting, is there?

That is a joke! I am only teasing you. There are things you are very bad at shooting. Trees. Rocks. Small furry creatures.

By the way, have I mentioned that the Cartel stands quite firmly behind Supreme Chancellor Palpatine? Separatists are bad! Down with Separatists! Clones are our friends. The Cartel loves clones!

It is also very worth your time to defend Cularin from maddened gundarks. Now, I can hear you saying, "But Thurm Loogg, we have seen very few gundarks in Cularin. Why should we worry about them?" I ask you this, Cularin: Have you ever seen the devastation that can be wrought by a maddened gundark? If not, you will have to take my word for it. You do not want a maddened gundark loose in Cularin. Eschew mad gundarks, defend your borders against their entry!

I feel obliged to point out that the Cartel does not now, nor has it ever, trafficked in gundarks.

You may have seen my point by now. I hope you have. The Cartel is not a threat to Cularin! Rumors you may have heard about the Cartel working with the Thaereians are simply untrue! We must move our goods through their perimeter, but we do so just as any other legitimate business does. With bribes and smuggling.

This is a joke! The Cartel will never be caught bribing or smuggling.

Aside from the one time with the ch'hala trees, but that was not really the Cartel, per se. Just one poor, misbegotten individual driven mad by too much time in hyperspace.

Well, as much as it pains me to say, my expert Cartel technicians are telling me that several individuals in the system have tapped into our feed and are, even as I speak, attempting to close the security problems that allowed this transmission to be possible. So, I wish you good evening. May the For--